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THE GULF WAR: AN ANALYSIS OF AMERICAN AND
ARAB CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

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ENCOUNTERS

by

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ABSTRACT

United States (U.S.) involvement in future regional conflicts may take the form of such coalition warfare as that of Operations Desert Shield/Storm (ODS/S). This warfare normally requires that U.S. troops operate in different cultural environments with other nationalities. It might also require Special Operations Forces to function as Civil Military Operations cells, or as trainers and advisors, or as liaison teams with coalition forces, especially if the coalition involves non-Western partners. Thus, predeparture preparation to enhance the cross-cultural understanding and communication skills between Americans and other nationalities acquires particular importance.

If Americans do not fully understand the cross-cultural dynamics that occurred in ODS/S, they could have problems in more difficult circumstances. This analysis draws from a study based on interviews conducted with twenty-one Army personnel involved in ODS/S. Those selected for interview had contact and interaction with the different Arab peoples ranging from limited exposure to nearly complete immersion. Using a model of analysis called the Cultural Trilogy, this paper interprets cross-cultural interactions between American servicepersons and Arabs during ODS/S. The important lesson from the interviews is that looking at the social side of Arab culture and examining the cultural consequences of behavior governed by the primordial sentiments have great significance.

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INTRODUCTION

Operation Desert Storm (ODS) was neither the United States' first venture in coalition warfare, nor is it likely to be the last one. Another military intervention may well take place involving one or both of the following patterns:

- National Command Authority deploys tens of thousands of combat, combat service, and combat service support troops to a foreign country.

- Specified units (particularly Special Operations Forces) receive a mission to operate as trainers, advisors, and liaison teams with coalition forces, especially when these include non-Western partners.

In the first scenario the issue becomes one of how the U.S. prepares its forces to operate within a different cultural environment in order to maintain the good will of the allied forces and that of the host nation populace. The second scenario points to the importance of developing sophisticated cross-cultural communications skills needed for effective interpersonal interaction.

Operations Desert Shield/Storm (ODS/S) exemplified both scenarios with the second unfolding in two ways. Special Forces (SF) assessed training needs and conducted training of coalition partners preceding the ground offensive. In addition, following the four-day war, Civil Military Operations personnel processed enemy prisoners of war and displaced civilians, assisted in restoration of government and public services in Kuwait, and participated in relief operations for the Kurds.

Desert Storm was a military success and--in the evidence to be presented here--a cross-cultural success. Accordingly, evaluations as to what worked carry more validity than would be the case, had the Gulf War proved militarily inconclusive and triggered a frenzy of post-war finger-pointing. Even in evaluating cross-cultural successes, however, we must not draw the wrong lessons. Unless we fully understand the dynamics of what occurred between Arabs and Americans, we could have problems in more difficult circumstances. Part of understanding requires analysis to raise hidden American assumptions to the surface and to identify mind-sets forming the lenses through which Americans make evaluations.

It must be added that senior military analysts consider the Gulf War to be an anomaly. A conventional war by a coalition force to repel the blatant aggression of one almost-friendless state against a small neighbor is an unlikely scenario for the future. More significantly, the increasing occurrence of localized instability in many parts of the world has followed the decline of Marxist ideology and the disintegration of political economic structures within the affected countries.

Civil strife in the Balkans, certain former Soviet republics, Northern Ireland, India, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Latin America, various African countries as well as in many parts of the Arab world--is, in and of itself, not a threat to the U.S. It characterizes, nevertheless, the patterns of conflict most likely to dominate headlines for the indefinite future. Applications of lessons learned to future events suggest the

possibility of the U.S. responding, in a multiagency effort (possibly including military elements), with multinational forces or under United Nations auspices to areas threatened by religious, regional, inter-ethnic, and other similar forms of internal conflict.

The American success in the Gulf War, however, may well erase recollection of cultural problems encountered, creating the possibility that threats will crop up in future situations in which American technology will have neither the flexibility nor the superiority to prevail in cultural conflict. How well prepared are our forces to operate in such environments? What lessons can we learn from Operation Desert Storm?

The purpose of this paper is to interpret Arab and American cultural patterns through analysis of the cross-cultural encounters in Desert Storm. Arab culture is probably one of the two most difficult of the major cultures for Americans to understand and to learn to work within. (Japanese culture is the other.)

This paper draws from a study based on interviews conducted in September and October 1991, with twenty-one Army personnel who participated in Operations Desert Shield/Storm (ODS/S). Those selected for interview were personnel who came from units that were accessible to the authors and whose contact and interaction with the different Arab peoples ranged from limited exposure to nearly complete immersion. Results from the twenty-one interviews, though statistically inconclusive, may be considered representative of the experiences of at least selected groups of American servicepersons in ODS/S.

A conceptual model called "the Cultural Trilogy" is this paper's basis for analysis of the empirical interview data. The Cultural Trilogy integrates the theory and practice of teaching cross-cultural communication and can enhance predeparture, cross-cultural programs, mission briefings, and orientations.

Section I: Operations Desert Shield/Storm (ODS/S)

The Gulf War: An Analysis of American and Arab Cross-Cultural Encounters

"In my case, the efforts for these years to live in the dress of Arabs, and to imitate their mental foundation, quitted me of my English self, and let me look at the West and its conventions with new eyes: they destroyed it all for me. At the same time, I could not sincerely take on Arab skin: it was an affectation only Sometimes these selves would converse in the void; and then madness was very near, as I believe it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two environments." T. E. Lawrence¹

ODS/S PRE-DEPARTURE CROSS-CULTURAL PREPARATION

The Army's active and mobilized reserve components alerted for duty in ODS/S received a variety of cross-cultural training programs before departure. Preparation varied from detailed formal briefings on Saudi Arabia and desert operations to ad hoc classes taught by unit leaders at levels down to that of the platoon. On some posts, the chaplains conducted a major share of the briefings on Islamic beliefs and Arab customs.

Specified units received refresher courses in basic Arabic, and some individuals took the initiative to study Arabic on their own. Briefing guides and orientation pamphlets were hurriedly prepared and distributed, while some units drafted their own. The Commander-in-Chief of Central Command, General Norman Schwarzkopf, at the outset emphasized in a message to troops the importance he placed on cross-cultural sensitivity.²

Friction and misunderstandings can always arise between forces of different nationalities as well as between uniformed personnel and local civilians. Early reports indicate, though, that the overall predeparture preparation of U.S. forces averted some of this friction. Said one news account:

Good guidance, limited personal contact and no booze--whatever the reasons, American troops are on their best behavior in Saudi Arabia, and the locals are impressed. In the eight weeks since the first U.S. military forces were deployed in Operation Desert Shield, officials said there have been no reported insults to Saudi culture--things that American and Saudi officials had most feared.³

¹ T. E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom, A. Triumph, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, Penguin Books, 1973, p. 30.

² "Every Soldier is an Ambassador for the U.S.," Army Times, August 17, 1990.

³ "Saudis Praise Behavior of American Troops," Associated Press release, September 29, 1990.

General Schwarzkopf expressed strong satisfaction with the personal behavior of his troops in the war.⁴

After-action reports on the role of Special Operations Forces (SOF) in the Gulf War and Provide Comfort Stated that, though language training was important and required increased emphasis, the generic cross-cultural skills of the Special Forces (SF), Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) personnel in the end proved more important than language proficiency by itself.⁵

So, where lies the problem? And what, if anything, needs fixing? Answering those questions requires first an examination of "The Cultural Trilogy."

⁴ General Schwarzkopf's remarks before the Senate Armed Services Committee on June 12, 1991.

⁵ U.S. Army Special Operations Lessons Learned Desert Shield/Storm, August 1991, and Operation Provide Comfort: Lessons Learned Observations, Draft, 27 November 1991, prepared by U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

Section II: The Cultural Trilogy

Three areas of deficiency in cross-cultural preparation formed the background for this project. One of these deficient areas pertains to the Army's handling of cross-cultural training, and two pertain to American predispositions that commonly influence cross-cultural interpretation and training.

This paper will apply "the Cultural Trilogy," a model for describing cultures and analyzing cultural differences, to interpret the interview findings. The Cultural Trilogy is a system of analysis which integrates culture's elusive complexity with the humanities and life sciences.⁶

At its least complex level, the trilogy is based on three assumptions:

■ Individual analysis: Culture is a creative tension between the psychology of the individual, with its roots in biology, and the sociology of the communal group.

■ Time-factored currents of activities: Culture is dynamic, and American culture centers upon such time-factored individual needs and motives as affiliation, power, and achievement.

■ Primordial sentiments and social organization of culture: Communal cultural emotions of primordial sentiment based on language, region, traditions, religion, ethnicity, and race provide the bonds for the social organization of cultures in general.⁷

⁶ The description of the Cultural Trilogy is extracted from two sources: (1) Edward C. Stewart, "An Intercultural Interpretation of the Persian Gulf Crisis," Intercultural Communication Studies, No. 4. Published by the Intercultural Communications Institute, Kanda University of International Studies, 1991, pp. 3-8; and (2) Edward C. Stewart "The Cultural Trilogy," an unpublished manuscript containing minor terminology revisions.

⁷ Primordial sentiments can be divisive or integrative. Language is divisive in Canada and Belgium but integrative in Japan and Israel. Region is divisive in the U.S. (1850s) but integrative in Switzerland. Tradition is divisive in Indonesia but integrative in Japan (Edo Period). Religion is divisive in India and N. Ireland, but integrative in the Arabic countries. Ethnicity is divisive in the Balkans but integrative in the U.S. Race is divisive in South Africa but integrative in Japan. See Edward C. Stewart, "Deep Prediction and the Media," Language Research Bulletin, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1988, and Stewart's other works (footnote 6) for full explanation of "The Cultural Trilogy."

Section III: Scope of Survey

Twenty-one service personnel who served in the Gulf War were interviewed about their cross-cultural relations with the Arabs with whom they came into contact. The purpose of the empirical study was to identify aspects of culture which blocked and those which assisted cooperation between Americans and Arabs. The obstacles identified were labeled "blind spots" and the facilitators, "receptive centers," yielded four categories:

1.) Blind spots of Arabs: most difficult aspects of Arab cultures for cooperating with American culture.

2.) Blind spots of Americans: most difficult aspects of American culture for cooperating with Arab cultures.

3.) Receptive centers of Arabs: aspects of the Arab cultures that contributed the most to unit mission accomplishment.

4.) Receptive centers of Americans: aspects of American culture that contributed the most to unit mission accomplishment.

In the analysis of the empirical data, the determination was that the interviewees' involvement with Arab counterparts varied considerably as a function of the Americans' duties. Involvement for some was slight, stronger with others, but deeper with a third group. According to the gradient of slight-moderate-deep involvement, the Americans were classified respectively as (1) Observers, (2) Transactors, and (3) Immersees.

Observers. Observers formed a number of perceptions about Arabs and their environment in addition to issues about religion, women, and driving. They noted the presence of poverty next to the signs of a wealthy society. Observers reported specifically on cleanliness, religion, women, and driving. These observations provide the basis for perceptions of social values in Arab hierarchical society. There were only sparse comments about interpersonal interactions, which described only a few problem areas in working with the Arabs. The observers conveyed the impression that they had followed basic guidelines in cross-cultural interaction, particularly those pertaining to sensitivity to cultural norms and to avoiding giving offense to the Arabs.

Transactors. Interviewees classified as transactors expressed the same perception as the observers, but had more comments on interacting with the Arabs. They found two general keys to cooperation: patience and full participation in the ritual of hospitality. For example, the transactors learned to accept the offer of tea or coffee from the merchants as the threshold they had to cross to initiate business. Two transactors noted the Arabs preferred to make commitments that they did not intend to keep as a way of avoiding confrontations.

Immersees. The immersees, representing two battalions of 5th SF, formed what one general called "the glue that held the coalition together." These men faced the

Herculean task of training and influencing the armed forces of several nationalities to operate as part of a unified allied effort. There were 104 maneuver elements with which 5th Group had liaison and training teams. Teams from 5th Group assisted the Joint Arab Forces in upgrading their proficiency in such areas as nuclear, chemical, biological warfare (NBC) training, close air support coordination, conduct of border security operations, and other aspects of tactical training to enable them to mesh efficiently within the total war machine. Some of the nationalities involved had little, if any, previous experience working with Americans. As might be expected, the immersees provided the most comprehensive accounts of cross-cultural interactions with Arab personnel.

The data collected from the interviewees can be organized into six categories: (1) American Perceptions of Arabs and Arab Customs; (2) American Inferences about Arab Perceptions of Americans; (3) Areas of Cooperation Between Americans and Arabs; (4) Areas of Disharmony Between Americans and Arabs; (5) Perceptions of Arab Efficiency and Military Professionalism; and (6) Views About Cross-cultural Preparation. Concepts from the Cultural Trilogy form the framework to interpret the content from the interviews, since they constitute a perspective outside of the American mind-set.

AMERICAN PERCEPTIONS OF ARABS AND ARAB CUSTOMS

The Americans in the sample had experience with a wide range of cultural diversity among the Arabs, but the balance of their transactions took place with Arabs from nations actively engaged in the war: Saudis, Kuwaitis, Iraqis, Syrians, and Egyptians. In their interviews, the Americans gave evidence that they quickly abandoned the media and American cultural stereotypes of Arabs and acquired instead perceptual sensitivity of Arab diversity from nation to nation, and cultural variation among Arabs in the same country, Saudi Arabia, where the Americans were located.

Criterion of Westernization. American culture's preoccupation with Westernization permeated American perceptions and influenced their evaluations of Arabs. Many interviewees reported detached feelings toward the Saudis, when they compared these feelings to their feelings of affinity for Kuwaitis, Iraqis, Egyptians, and Syrians, whom they described as more Western and less rigid in their practice of Islam.

Westernization in Arab societies can be used to identify the major cross-cultural issues between Americans and Arabs. Westernization has two sides to it: (1) the hard surface of products of technology and, (2) the soft underside of deep values and efficient procedures required to manage the development, distribution, and consumption of products. Both sides of technology affect the culture of Arab societies, shifting emphasis from interpersonal culture (present: interior life) and political cultural (past and far future: public life) to economic culture (near future: work life), which, traditionally, is the weakest time variation in Arab culture.

Arabs desire the products of Westernization, but they debate and fear possible consequences of the great Western cultural shift. The Arab "disturbance of spirits" over the loss of their own culture at the hands of the West, flowering after the 1967

defeat, permeates the Arab-American interactions as reported by interviewees.⁸ The Americans generally sensed and avoided the quagmires of the cultural shift.

The great Western cultural shift liberates features of individualism, particularly the need for and appreciation of, specialists to replace charismatic, political, and magian figures.⁹ The cultural shift affects patterns of activities as practical values gain in contrast to deep culture. It is inevitable that civil ties also gain significance over primordial ones. The cultural order shifts toward "technical thinking" or technicism--meaning values of efficiency, equality, individualism, and time used as control. Americans feel more relaxed with Arabs when they sense in them a shift toward technicism.

Members of a medical clearing company had the duty of treating Iraqi POWs with whom they held long discussions, and, in some cases, with whom they developed personal relationships. One female medic became a "pen pal" with an Iraqi Christian POW. A Civil Affairs captain became acquainted with an English-speaking, Iraqi POW physician, a field grade officer in the Republican Guard, and found him friendly, cooperative, and concerned about his wounded. Another American, a medical sergeant, saw the Iraqis as more down-to-earth and easier to talk to. Finally, the Iraqis showed more respect than did the Saudis for American female medical personnel.

Saudi Arabia has achieved economic modernization and preserved observance of Islamic practices while resisting "cultural" Westernization. The interviewees appreciated that country's modern infrastructure, including well-stocked supermarkets, new highways, and an efficient telephone system. Some found the Saudis to be evasive communicators: reserved and somewhat more inscrutable than Arabs of other nationalities.

Westernization divides the organic whole of Arab life into a dichotomy which subordinates life to material goals and abandons morality based on Islam in the form of religion and of law. Since Arabs avoid the secular authority of courts, to discard Islamic law and to tolerate the erosion of traditional means of mediation would deprive the society of a moral sentiment on which to build an ethic. In Saudi Arabia there does not exist an institutional precedent for social ethics supported by a political government and based on legislated law, as in the United States.

The most serious threat from Westernization is not in abandoning Islam as much as it is in practicing it in the Western form of a religious faith, instead of an essentially spiritual and Islamic style of life, rooted in traditions and activities of interpersonal culture (present: interior life). To this threat, the Arabs have no adequate response.

A CA captain described Saudi Arabia as different in its treatment of women, public executions, and hypocritical toleration of poverty in a wealthy country. "I perceive the Arabs as a very evil people. I don't know why I do that, because they treated me great."

⁸ Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples, Cambridge, MA, Belknap Press, 1991, pp. 434-458.

⁹ Raphael Patai, The Arab Mind, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973, pp. 316-317.

American observations about strict Saudi religious practices reflect the contemporary dichotomy of Westernized elites separated from their own tradition-bound populations. The American notion of good and evil applied to social justice informed the judgment of the captain. But from the Saudi perspective, a mental dichotomy of abstract good and evil, outside Islam, as a tool of thought, does not exist. In contrast Arabs conceive of their reality of political culture (past and far future: public life) as an organic whole based on Islam, while dichotomies, when they appear, are social not cognitive. Perhaps the deepest dichotomy in the Arab way of thinking is that between Muslim and non-Muslims, or infidels.

Arab Friendliness. "I can say that the Saudis were very warm, the Egyptians were very warm, and even the Syrians at a certain point—they were warm and open as soon as the politics was resolved," said a senior SFOfficer, perceiving characteristic Arab congeniality and politeness. Americans critical of the Saudis for one reason or another did, however, find them to be friendly and hospitable overall. "Saudi officers were willing to cooperate with us [U.S. enlisted]," said one specialist.

"Arabs are a friendly people," according to a Special Forces sergeant assigned to a brigade of the Saudi regular army. "They have a friendly type personality. But it takes them a while to get to like you, to really open up to you."

If primordial sentiments are asymmetrical, the Arabs do not interact. They are emotional, and so is friendship. However, before it begins, it is necessary to participate in activities of interpersonal culture (present: interior life). The first step is for the Arab to assume a social role of host vis-à-vis guests, but the emotion here displayed is not "friendly." Instead, the word we should read in the sergeant's observation is "congenial." To be sure, friendship can and did develop between the Americans and their counterparts, but first the Americans had to walk through the house of hospitality, expressing values of interpersonal culture (present: interior life). The institution of hospitality frequently noted by Americans has its roots in Bedouin origins and serves as a mechanism for clearing the hurdles on the approach to loyalty and trust.

Views of Religion. While respecting Arab religious practices, U.S. personnel found the Saudis to be unnecessarily severe at home, even when not consistent, but slack and undemanding outside of Saudi borders. Said one Special Forces officer:

Openly the Arabs have one set of behavior, but they have another level in which they really live and operate. It is almost like Allah does not see Bahrain: you go party in Bahrain, but your conduct is different back in Saudi.

The effect of Saudi religious practices sometimes ruffled the American notion of efficiency. The Saudis would stop work at King Khalid Military City during prayer time. The fueling points would be closed. Said the Civil Affairs officer:

I am not sure, but I think that the Saudis were also upset that we were not complying with their laws....Some of the more orthodox would think that we were terrible heathens. Some of the more practical ones would realize that we had a war on and the job had to be done.

A fundamental difference exists in the way U.S. and Arab societies look at religion. We distinguish between religion and social norms. For us, religion is a matter of belief, and its practice is for Sundays, more or less. To the Arab, Islam spells out day-to-day behavior interpersonal culture (present: interior life). For a devout Muslim, Islamic practices are the social norms. The Muslim ideal does not change, but many societies try to adjust to it to fit their special circumstances. Local variations abound. Islam does provide for such exceptions to religious practices as allowing the sick to eat during fasting. These exceptions allow Muslims to adapt to changed or unusual conditions of interpersonal culture (present: interior life) without compromising the capability of Islam and its traditions to tie together surface, deep, and procedural culture.

Concerning consistency of belief, one officer concluded that Arabs, including those who are married, consider it acceptable to have sexual liaisons with non-Muslim women when they study in the West. This observation is not about an inconsistent belief system as much as it is about the variance of individual practice from religious tenets. Localism (local customs built into Islam) and social determination (tribes, groups, etc.) influence individual performance beyond Islamic beliefs. Indeed, much of the practice of Islam is best understood as the pursuit of tradition and customs rather than beliefs.

The varied attitudes among the Arabs about religious observance came out in one account. A female captain related pulling off the road at a chicken stand and ordering some sandwiches. This was during the holy month of Ramadan when one should avoid eating in front of Arabs during daylight hours.

A vehicle of Egyptian soldiers pulls up besides us. They start pointing toward us and saying it is Ramadan. So we put our food away. They then get out and start laughing. They pulled out their own sandwiches and started to eat.

This shows the localization (i.e., secularization) of Islam among the Egyptians. It is also the Egyptian way of making fun of American naiveté and of Saudi customs.

Observance of Customs. With two possible exceptions—one concerning the status of women in a male-dominated society and the other concerning Saudi driving practices—the interviewees encountered no major difficulties in adjusting to Saudi customs. Much of the predeparture preparation and all the printed briefing guides did emphasize such basic taboos as: don't point the sole of your foot at an Arab; don't hand an Arab an object with your left hand; don't offer an Arab alcohol; don't bring up the subject of sex or women, etc.

Some found Saudi customs more relaxed in outlying locales than in Riyadh. In Haffa Al Batten, according to one officer, women would come up and talk with Americans on the street, an unthinkable act in Riyadh

A SF lieutenant colonel found that some of what he had learned about Arabs was confirmed when he arrived in Saudi and some was not. "Some of the 'guidelines'

we received--like don't eat with the left hand--were not confirmed....In many cases we often overreact in outlining certain taboos."

Special Forces trainers also found that the Saudis are not as strict about visitors observing their customs as the Army's orientations led some to believe. Some of the booklets on Saudi implied there was no room for error. The limitation in following "Do's and Don'ts" from any cross-cultural guide is that the guides cannot incorporate the context and variations of the people concerned. In the old days certain customs may have had religious or other meanings. Over the years modification of localized interpersonal culture (present: interior life) has altered the practices. For example, the Koran accepted polygamy as a way to protect women from slavery and prostitution, but it did so only on the condition that men should treat them equally.

Said a Special Forces sergeant:

We found the longer we stayed with them--they are just like us....After working with the Arab forces for a while as we did, we got real comfortable with them and it became second nature.

The sergeant's observation that "they are just like us" is disturbing. It is often encountered with Americans, and it may represent an influence of individualism, which rejects any source of causation other than the individual. Americans often find it very difficult to accept the idea that cultural, social, or even political principles can explain why people act the way they do. This attitude is part of the American culture. Concerning the alcohol taboo, an officer noted, "The Kuwaitis were more Westernized [than the Saudis]. They would tell us they couldn't wait to get home and get some good Scotch."

Special Forces (SF) Trainers found that the Egyptians and Syrians seldom followed the Saudi practice of prayer five times a day, and that they were not reticent about discussing women. However, Egyptian and Syrian practice may not be Saudi practice. While the SF certainly became attuned to differences among their Arab partners, Americans in general want to see similarities in peoples. Seeing other societies through the lenses of individualism while overlooking the influence of deep culture and the social organization of culture may explain this American proclivity. Even with Special Forces, there may have been an understandable tendency, at least initially, to see Saudis, Egyptians, and Syrians alike in ways that may not be true.

Many Americans noted the large number of imported workers in Saudi Arabia. These temporary residents from such countries as Pakistan, the Philippines, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, etc. did much of the manual labor. One Civil Affairs (CA) officer concluded that Saudis did not like to work--that is, to work up a sweat. An Iraqi-American sergeant observed:

There is a hierarchy about jobs in Saudi. There are different levels of jobs. The Saudis have the prestigious administrative jobs like managers and owners. There is a distinction between good jobs for Saudis and those for Egyptians, Palestinians, Pakistanis, Lebanese, etc., such as waiter, cook, etc. These are like second-hand jobs. They [the Saudis] don't take these jobs, because they are very proud of what they are.

The wealth of contemporary Saudi Arabia perhaps permits the people to preserve the old pattern of a consuming society where leisure, not work, is the primary value.

Arab Attitude Toward Women. An area that caused some of the interviewees considerable concern pertained to the status of women. The Saudi attitude toward women veered sharply away from American values. Many Saudis were nonplused at seeing American servicewomen in a position of equality with men and carrying out a variety of duties and occupying positions of authority. This is, after all, a society in which Arab women must travel in a head-to-toe veil and are prohibited from driving vehicles and conversing with men outside their families.

Another fundamental difference between American and Saudi society pertains to the view about the sexes. The Saudis see male and female as roles. We Americans see biological and sexual differences between the sexes, but not necessarily role differences.

An American female captain serving as a purchasing agent found that the merchants always treated her with respect and consideration.

They looked at us like we were over there to help them--and their attitude was, 'What can I do to help?'....Once while I was waiting for a merchant to finish business with another American, the store owner let my guard and driver call home from his office phone.

She got respect, because the Saudis saw her in a role. In that capacity, they saw her not so much as a woman but as an American doing business. An Arabic-speaking Iraqi-American sergeant thought that some of the merchants in the market gave U.S. women better prices than he himself could get.

Some Saudi men experienced difficulty in dealing with U.S. servicewomen, that is, women in non-traditional roles. One male medic concluded that the Saudis thought U.S. female soldiers to be concubines. Some Saudi men offered the medics a Mercedes for one of their women. Several Saudis asked a female captain to be their number two or number three wife.

Other servicewomen found that the Saudi males were aggressive with American females to the point of rudeness, wanting to hug, touch, pinch, or kiss them. A lot of Saudi men wanted to take pictures of U.S. females, or of themselves with American women. A female medic inferred that Saudis viewed U.S. servicewomen as prostitutes.

Indeed, Saudi society does adhere to certain localized interpretations from Islamic teachings regarding women. Interviewees variously inferred from their observations that the treatment women received from men was in keeping with the teachings of Islam, that Saudis see a man's wife as his property, that Saudis suppress their women, or conversely that Saudis do not consider their women as second class citizens at all but as sacred and worthy of protection. A Civil Affairs captain described observing the following event:

I was in Haffa Al Batten to buy some supplies. There was a Chevrolet station wagon parked on the street with about four women in the back of

it—all with their veils on. One of them waved her hand to me. The driver, this guy in a white thobe [robe], opened the door, jerked her out of the car, threw her down on the sidewalk, and proceeded to kick her in the stomach about three times. He then looked at me like, 'You're next.' I just walked on down the street, me and my sergeant. We got into our vehicle and departed. We had always been told to have nothing to do with Arab females: don't motion to them; don't whistle at them; don't wave at them—be culturally sensitive, because they overly protect their females, and they really do. But when they beat on someone, they are not overly protecting them.

It must be said here that an American specialist on Saudi Arabia who reviewed an initial draft of this paper questioned this account. "I cannot conceive of a Saudi man beating one of his women in the street in front of Americans." However, if Saudi men practice "wife-beating," the event on the street would not be so reprehensible. Perhaps, the Saudi driver interpreted the woman's hand wave as an affront to himself rather than improper behavior on the part of the women. Under the circumstances he felt compelled to assert his power and virility. An adequate explanation of this event cannot be derived from the information available.

Saudi Driving Practices. Americans found driving in Saudi Arabia rather treacherous. Saudi drivers felt it to be the 'macho thing' to pass you or your convoy, sometimes running you off the road. A lot of Americans were killed on the road," according to one sergeant. A medical specialist stated:

You could be driving a truck at a maximum speed of 50 MPH, and one Saudi vehicle would pass you on the right while three would pass you on the left while traffic was coming toward us. And there was nothing you could do....They would not pay attention to signs. Lines on the road were just for decoration only. There was no regard for anybody else on the road.

This medic saw the Saudis, as revealed by their driving practices, to be fatalistic--willing "to give their soul to Allah."

To the Saudis, driving is an event of interpersonal culture, not an activity of economic culture. Thus they may be somewhat insouciant about what we Americans consider proper driving skills and highway etiquette. Another factor is what can be called vertical causation. Arabs do attribute more to fate, to Allah's will, than to horizontal human causation. They see themselves as having much less control over their lives than do we Americans. Another possible explanation comes from anthropologist Edward T. Hall on the issue of "personal space" and manners and rights of the road:

In the United States we tend to defer to the vehicle that is bigger, more powerful, faster, and heavily laden. While a pedestrian walking along the road may feel annoyed he will not think it unusual to step aside for a fast moving vehicle. He knows that because he is moving he does not have the right to the space around him that he has when he is standing still....It appears that the reverse is true to the Arabs who apparently take

on the rights to space as they move. For someone to move into a space an Arab is moving into is a violation of his rights. It is infuriating to an Arab to have someone cut in front of him on the highway. It is the American's cavalier treatment of moving space that makes the Arab call him aggressive and pushy.¹⁰

Other Interpretations. The observations described concerning the status of women and Saudi driving produced several interpretations. One medical sergeant concluded, "Some of their customs and beliefs were primitive." To a CA major, Saudi driving habits were reckless. Furthermore in light of the Iraqis' shooting their own soldiers and considering the opinion of Kuwaitis that Americans were too kind to Iraqi prisoners, Americans concluded that Muslims are much more harsh--indeed, almost barbaric--in the way they treat individuals. Compared to life in other countries, life in Saudi Arabia has the least amount of value, in the view of one officer. It is more accurate to say that Arabs see life as less dependent on human agency than do people in Euro-American culture. Their life-view may be described as fatalistic and tragic, while Americans hold a sentimental view which often conceals the brutal side of life.

AMERICAN INFERENCES ABOUT ARAB PERCEPTIONS OF AMERICANS

This section would have been titled "Arab Perceptions of Americans," except that the authors acquired no direct information about Americans from Arabs.

Reactions to American Presence. When the Americans arrived, Arabs greeted them with attitudes ranging from amazement to surprise mixed with elements of fear and uneasiness. Many of the Arabs whom the interviewees encountered seemed to welcome the American presence, though it is difficult to discern to what extent Americans were grudgingly accepted or seen as intruders. As Americans were assimilated into activities of interpersonal culture (present: interior life) and began performing their duties, admiration for the skills and professionalism replaced the surprise and amazement. In the interview, an Iraqi-American sergeant reported:

We left a good impression on the Iraqis we captured, and on the Saudis, even though they did not want us there. Once, when I was in the market, I was talking with this guy. He said, "Are you originally Arab?" I said, 'Yes.' He said to me, 'We don't need you Americans here. We Arabs can solve this problem on our own.' I was really upset. He was speaking to me as an Arab. I told him that we are away from our homes and families not just for Saudi or Kuwait but for humanity. We would like to go back yesterday. I told him, 'If you could solve the problem, you should have done it a long time ago.'

During their first month, Special Forces trainers did not get much across to the 2nd Saudi Arabia National Guard (SANG) Brigade. The Saudi soldiers were simply amazed at American presence. The Saudi soldiers were following patterns of

¹⁰ Edward T. Hall, The Hidden Dimension, New York, Doubleday Anchor Press Book, 1969, pp. 154-155.

interpersonal culture (present: interior life), whereas an increased concentration of technical training represents a less familiar activity of economic culture (near future: work life).

Americans as Hired Help. Given the numerous imported workers, some American soldiers wondered if the Saudis saw them as hired labor. Medical company personnel learned that some Saudis thought American soldiers were receiving additional money from the King for their military service and saw them as mercenaries.

Lionized View of Americans. Iraqis looked up to the Americans and to American technology. Said the Iraqi-American sergeant assigned to a MI Brigade:

I showed a captured Iraqi general a Clint Eastwood video [a 1960s spaghetti Western such as A Fistful of Dollars]. He was fascinated. He wanted to watch it over and over again. He was very excited. He would ask questions such as did Eastwood really kill those three guys with one quick draw? Is he really American.

He continued:

The Iraqis looked up to us; they looked at us like we were gods. They were scared of us. They know we have the technology; they know we have the airpower and everything. They know for a fact that we are a superpower. That is the reason they started to give up very quickly. They were intimidated by us.

A Civil Affairs major learned that some Iraqi soldiers had been told that American forces were really Jews--Israelis. He added, "They were grateful to find out that we were Americans."

POW Treatment. Perhaps part of their gratitude may have grown from the fact that they received better treatment as POWs than they did as soldiers in their own army. According to a Civil Affairs major:

The Iraqis told us that discipline was enforced by shooting people. The battalion commander could actually shoot people, if they did not do what they were told. It is my opinion that that did not help morale among soldiers at all. In fact, the doctor told us that the battalion commander said he had to tolerate the doctor but that he would shoot him like anybody else, if the doctor got out of line.

Pro-American Sentiments. A female captain reported:

The Kuwaitis naturally had a very strong pro-American bent. A Kuwaiti family in Jubar had even set up a hamburger stand. I walked in to get a hamburger. I was in uniform. This man came up and asked if I was American. He said thank you for helping us. He introduced me to his wife and kids. The kids were saying in English, "Thank you, thank you," over and over. It was really touching.

After Kuwait City was liberated, women would come up and give American soldiers hugs right on the street. One CA sergeant visited the home of his Kuwaiti translator and met his father and other family members. They stated how glad they were Americans were there. A Kuwaiti interpreter's family invited twelve American CA personnel in for tea and sweets. They conversed and exchanged gifts. A CA major said, "Some of the Kuwaiti sergeants (interpreters) insisted on paying for our meals and giving us gifts when the war was over."

AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN AMERICANS AND ARABS

The rapport displayed by Special Forces in the operation stemmed from an extensive background of experience with, and specific training for, missions like those in ODS/S. The SF were selected for their mission, because they were highly proficient in their military specialties to begin with. Their hands-on experience in managing cultural differences provided them with patience, flexibility, and adaptability in their assignments.

Familiarity with Region, People, and Terrain. For well over a decade the 5th Group has been assigned the Middle East as its area of responsibility. It has participated in such joint exercises as "Bright Star" and other deployments for training in allied Arab nations and has acquired extensive experience operating in a desert environment. Accordingly, the Group has developed a general understanding of Arabs as distinct and different from Western peoples. Their overall familiarity with Arab customs, communication styles, learning styles, and the like attuned them to the rhythm of interpersonal culture (present: interior life) prevalent in the Arab societies.

The SF and Egyptian commanders from one unit were already personally well acquainted from previous joint trainings. "We had developed good rapport with the Egyptians in previous exercises," said a team warrant officer. "When we made our first visit to the Egyptian headquarters, within our first three hours we got a call home on their telephone."

Language Ability. The second factor that enhanced rapport was the SF language skills that ran the gamut from survival Arabic to minimal proficiency. The Saudis were impressed that some SF spoke Arabic. Just the ability to introduce oneself and describe one's rank and duties went a long way in demonstrating to their Arab counterparts a respect for Arabic language and culture. "Language is the key. If you have the language, then you are good to go," said one sergeant. Virtually living with their counterparts, the SF used their language in social matters as well as in training and operational activities.

Language skill fits in with that primordial sentiment that is a very strong bonding force among Arabs. Arabs have a historical background in favor of language. The colorful, flowing--almost poetic--language of the Koran exemplifies and inspires elegance and nuance in contemporary writing and oratory that still seeks to emulate classical or literary Arabic. Language became one of the main pillars of the magnificent universities that flourished in the region from Baghdad to Toledo during the 11th

through 14th centuries. Today, language continues to occupy a significant place in Arab attitudes. Command of Arabic is a source of prestige.

Military Knowledge and Professionalism. The knowledge level and military professionalism of SF greatly impressed their Arab counterparts. A sergeant on a Forward Air Control (FAC) team gained such acceptance from the Syrian brigade commander that he was considered part of the commander's staff. Concerning rank-conscious Arab officers accepting American SF NCOs, one weapons sergeant stated: "It comes down to this: they respect you for your knowledge." Said another, "My knowledge was what countedWhatever I could do to help them was well received."

Americans explained what succeeded in American terms. Was it SF knowledge and professionalism that impressed the Arabs or was it the greater context? "I am accepted, because they want my knowledge" is only partially true. Knowledge by itself is not exactly the key. The key was the overall role they were playing, of which knowledge formed a part.

The Arab appreciation of SF knowledge should be evaluated in the context of the "cultural" mission. Arab forces lack "technical" and "procedural" expertise. Officers may occupy their positions for their ability to wield power rather than to provide technicism in leading troops. Enlisted men may acquire a narrow band of technical expertise but lack the flexibility to adopt to and perform in a different band of technicism.

Americans, however, naturally compensate for these relative weaknesses. Although somewhat naive in the exercise of power, Americans cultivate technical knowledge and particularly procedures in how "to get things done." The "technicism" of American culture is procedural culture in precisely the area which Arab culture has not cultivated. It may well be that Arab officers saw in the American capability and performance the key which opened the door to the performance of their own mission.

A SF engineer sergeant assigned to the 8th Brigade headquarters of the Saudi regular Army said:

The brigade's engineer company had so many tasks--they needed so much instruction that they were just willing to listen to anything. Whatever I could do to help them was well-received....Once we go in there and they saw we weren't obnoxious and arrogant with our knowledge, it got easier....We didn't use knowledge as power with them.

The sergeant worked closely with his Saudi counterpart, an engineer colonel.

He enhanced my training 100%...he even acted as my interpreter several times--something you don't see very much. When I had a colonel acting as my interpreter in front of his own men, I had no problem keeping their attention.

With the Arabs, knowledge is power. By acting as an interpreter, this colonel was not lowering himself but taking a critical part, that is, assuming a leadership role, in a situation of interpersonal culture (present: interior life). His authority was not only

military but also that of a paternal figure. While this narrative is a tribute to the sergeant's instructional skills, the colonel in interpreting was not so much acting as a conduit but as a mediator between the sergeant and his men. This is a revered role among Arabs.

A chemical captain and his NCO team of NBC instructors established rapport and gained respect through their professional knowledge about NBC, their instructional skills, and their willingness to spend time with their counterparts.

I made good friends with the [Saudi] brigade S-3, LTC _____. After training we would converse about training and a variety of subjects. He told me that at first he didn't trust us. He said he didn't know about me at first either. He added, "That very first day I watched you. You are a very good teacher. After I saw that you knew what you were talking about, I told my men not to worry about you. I told them you'll be fine." The credibility thing is the number one thing. Don't take anyone over there who only half knows the subject. They respect knowledge.

This is an American interpretation, which may be confusing knowledge with trust. For Arabs knowledge is power and therefore inseparable from the relations with holders of knowledge. In a situation as sensitive as the one described by the captain, the question of trust and relationship between the captain and Saudi lieutenant colonel may be just as important as the quality of knowledge.

Cross-cultural communication skill involves not just imparting knowledge but also being able to learn from and with others. An intelligence NCO assigned to the 2nd SANG advised:

Don't say, "We are here to help you." The best approach is, "We are so-and-so. What can we do for you?" Or, "This is what we have been tasked with. How do you want to do this?" If you act like you know it all, you put yourself in the position of never making any mistakes.

The engineer sergeant commented:

One of the things that helped a great deal was [to realize] that if you were always teaching them, they also had something to teach you. If you were not showing them that you were trying to learn the language or their customs, then you cannot get as comfortable with them. I would go over to the people we were working with and drink my additional two gallons of tea and practice my language. They would get a kick out of getting me to put a sentence together.

Patience and Adaptability. Trust building takes time and requires going into the Arab mode of interpersonal culture (present: interior life). Patience and adaptability became a prerequisite for successful transactions with the Arab peoples. "A 'Type A' personality who tends to excel in our military will experience a lot of frustration in Saudi," said one senior SF officer. It took several months for SF to gain the trust and acceptance of the Syrians. The Syrians initially turned down an SF commander's offer to conduct CAS and NBC training. Their response: "We don't need that. We know

that already." When the air war started, the ice suddenly broke. Said a sergeant on a FAC team, "I was a sergeant first class working with a brigadier."

Sometimes the SF trainers waited several months to see some of their recommendations bear fruit. A weapons sergeant stated:

It took us about two or three months to get the commander to consider repositioning his fire support weapons. The way they were initially set up rendered them almost useless. That was a big victory. We celebrated. That took a lot of work. It took demonstrations; it took politicking; it took buckets of tea. And it was done without our counterparts losing face.

AREAS OF DISHARMONY BETWEEN AMERICANS AND ARABS

Most of the observations in this section came from immersees, who had day-to-day contact with their Arab counterparts. The areas of disharmony--although none that proved insurmountable--can be described as: 1.) Determining Who Wields the Power; 2.) Casual Attitude about Schedules; 3.) Noncommitments; 4.) The Role of Fate; 5.) Face-Saving and Distortion of Facts; and 6.) The Potentially Divisive Political Issue.

Determining Who Wields the Power. Sometimes behind the official hierarchy there is a hidden power structure based on family connections and tribal affiliations, reflecting the third triad of the Cultural Trilogy. A senior SF officer said that one of the first challenges in working with the Arabs was finding out who really was in charge, who really wielded the power, among his Saudi counterparts.

In many cases it is finding out who are the movers and the shakers within the organization. A captain or major may walk around with an inordinate amount of influence in comparison with a colonel you are dealing with.

The "joints" in Arab society are primordial, not military.

Casual Attitude about Schedules. The Saudis and Syrians did not follow their training schedules, often did not start training on time, and were lucky to get five hours of training done from an eight hour training schedule. "In terms of training schedules the Arabs had no sense of urgency. This made them difficult to work with," said a weapons sergeant. Once when a SANG unit was late arriving at a range, they said that they moved when the spirit moved them. A senior SF officer confirmed these views:

Arabs have difficulty when it comes to scheduling something. Even if you have a flexible schedule, it is hard to get them to follow it at times. Training schedules meant nothing to them. Insha Allah. Training schedules were often shot to pieces. Meal schedules were only a little better. They only work a few hours in the morning and a few in the afternoon. Out of eight hours of training planned, you could achieve only four or five at the most. Also, the training was often determined

after a long bull session. You would drink tea and shoot the bull before even starting training. If it was raining and even if we were in a tent, they would still want to cancel training.

Americans with a strong economic culture tendency have a noticeable future orientation. Arabs display little anticipation of the future. Instead they focus on the interpersonal culture present. They do not formulate ideas in terms of the linear concept of time. Their patterns of thinking have little in common with American technicism. It is clear from the information collected that the Arabs do not use time as a control of behavior.

In some cases it took a lot of work, coordination, and personal salesmanship for SF just to get permission to use firing ranges. A SF officer described one instance of range miscoordination:

One occasion we were using the range to practice helo[copter] inserts. Then we started receiving incoming Saudi rocket fire. We had the range. This was a big operation these guys had worked up. The Saudis were getting ready, because some prince was coming to visit. But nobody cared to tell anybody inside the fire fan. We called range control. It was on Friday--a holiday. I was talking to the operations officer. They did not know who was out there. Then they figured it out. It was a very strange situation.

The Saudis saw the prince's visit as an epochal event. They use time to identify events rather than to measure temporal occurrences. What we see as an event of economic culture--efficient use of time and the range--is not a major consideration for them. Their attention is in getting things ready for the compelling political cultural event.

These episodes suggest Arab resistance to scheduling on time but even more important, first, of using time as a control of activities. Second, from the American point of view, the need for training usually means that the performance of soldiers should be improved. Training for better performance is most effective when learning is experiential, based on trial and error. None of these American ideas about improving military performance are accepted to the same degree by Arabs.

The Arab reactions convey the impression that training was seen as something which soldiers had to do, but which should not be allowed to interfere too much with the pace and quality of military life. The efficiency and optimal effort for improvement were not automatically present. Training, even on the range, retained some qualities of an episodic event.

Noncommitments. As social harmony is important to Arabs, they will make noncommitments rather than refuse a request. A JAG major in Civil Affairs commented:

Their blind spots are time and saving face. If they did not want to do something, you did not know that until after the fact, until it was too late. The Kuwaitis, too, would promise you things or say they would do things,

and then they wouldn't. It was important for them to agree, to appear cordial or gracious. It was better for them to lie than not to agree.

Our American mind-set emphasizes objective reality (facts). The Arab mind-set emphasizes interpersonal reality. To the Arabs a lie does not exist or is an insignificant happening. The Arabs value actions that maintain a modicum of social sensitivity in lieu of allowing "objective" facts to intrude.

The Role of Fate. Arabs ascribe much more of life's happenings to fate or to God's will than do Americans. Trainers providing NBC instruction to Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG) encountered a fatalism about a possible chemical attack. Said an intelligence sergeant:

They were influenced by the "Insha Allah" attitude: Allah will take care of me. They really did not believe that Saddam would use chemicals. Getting them to take this part of the training seriously was a challenge. As with American troops, you have to give them a good reason why they are doing this training.

Many soldiers had beards preventing their protective masks from making a tight fit....We tried to convince them that it would not do them any good to have all this NBC protective gear if they had these flowing beards. We couldn't tell them to shave their beards, which had religious significance. I don't know if you would call it "the macho thing," but they would sit there and laugh at us. That didn't bother us, but after a while we just told them that if we get hit by chemicals and if you have your beard, you are going to die.

Language, religion, and Bedouin traditions determine their identity. Values of manliness alongside fatalism about controlling individual fate lead them to accept that God would look after them.

Face-Saving and Distortion of Facts. In the early stages of the buildup, the Arab commanders neither initially recognized nor acknowledged that they could benefit from training by SF. In other instances, a face-saving tendency may have caused Arab officers to defend an unwise decision rather than acknowledge error. Said an SF warrant officer:

In one exercise we planned to attack an abandoned cement plant. This was on barren terrain. It was the only thing more than five feet tall for miles around. It is easily skylighted. We walked right by it. Our guys looked at it. Some of the younger Egyptian officers looked at it, but they didn't want to say anything to their leadership. I told the commander we had missed it. He refused to acknowledge his mistake. He declared that the open area to our front was the target, and we attacked that instead and went through the motions. Face is very important especially to their leaders.

Potentially Divisive Political Issue. The Syrians quizzed the SF trainers constantly concerning their own and the U.S. position on Israel. Said a weapons sergeant:

We tried to dodge that issue every conceivable way. I was honest with them. I did not have all that knowledge or background about the Arab-Israeli conflict. I tried to listen to what their point of view was and take part in the conversation without being committed one way or another. This topic came up every time we had any type of gathering. When we went to the brigade XO's tent to eat or watch TV with him, that subject came up.

There were numerous officers from other brigades in the division who came over to visit. They would bring up the American-Israeli relationship and how the Syrians fit into that equation. They backed us up into a corner and wanted to know who is it going to be--the Syrians or the Israelis. They were trying to make us commit to that. They hate the Israelis through and through. The Israelis were wrong; they were not supposed to be there. We tried to tell them that we did not get involved in policy issues. But they kept pressing us. They said, "We don't care what your government thinks; what do you think?"

According to the SF trainers, the Egyptians discussed previous wars but neither denigrated nor elevated the Israelis. After Saddam fired SCUD missiles into Israel, some Egyptians acknowledged that Israel had a right to defend herself.

An empirical look at the history of Arab societies reveals an underlying strain of dormant volatility. Some have said that the term "Arab unity" is a myth or at best only an ideal. There is a necessity of constructing an external enemy like Israel--although, indeed, a maze of emotionally-charged complex issues does polarize the Arabs and Israelis. A culture can emphasize inclusion or exclusion. We Americans emphasize inclusion and assimilation into the American mainstream. Arab culture emphasizes exclusion--one is a member of that society or is a nonperson. The effect of an exclusive culture with a diametrically opposed external enemy like Israel is to reduce the prospect of internal volatility.

PERCEPTIONS OF ARAB EFFICIENCY AND MILITARY PROFESSIONALISM

Overall SF developed not only a close working relationship with, but also a respect for, the military abilities of their Arab counterparts. This occurred in a context in which all the Arab forces constantly showed the Americans the gracious hospitality for which Arab peoples are well known. One sergeant assigned to the 2nd SANG commented that the Bedouins in SANG have a tradition about each tribe's trying to show its guests better hospitality than the other tribes. Syrian officers cordially invited some of their SF counterparts to visit them in Damascus.

Training Progress. Said an SF commander:

The Arab forces were slowly getting better over time, but it was not an easy task. Their officers did not realize at first that the Americans had a better way of doing things. Some of the battalion commanders were a little intractable at first. As an example, the Syrians automatically practiced breaching a minefield as a part of getting to the objective. We tried to persuade them that there was no reason to breach a minefield if you didn't have to. By-pass it. Then the U.S. influence began to sink in. A Syrian officer told me, "We have learned more from you in the last few days [before the ground offensive] than we have in all the preceding months."

The SF had a high regard for the Egyptian Ranger Regiment. These were tough-minded, competitive soldiers, many of whom had seen combat. Some Egyptian Ranger officers liked to test the knowledge of the Americans.

Support from the Arab Commanders. Some of the Arab commanders showed military professionalism simply in recognizing the value in utilizing American experience. The Saudi general who commanded the 8th Brigade of the regular army emphasized that the officers and NCOs would learn from the Americans. "After the general broke the ice with his officers, it made the difference." In a mutually reinforcing situation, the U.S. trainers achieved a strong credibility with their senior Arab counterparts. "When our detachment leader went to General _____ with a recommendation, the general would try to act on it."

Battle Performance. A SF sergeant noted:

We were aware that the Saudis were not a warrior nation. They are more business oriented. They have hired others to do their fighting for them in the past; in fact, the hire others to do everything. But the soldiers soldier when they have to.

In the battle of Khafji, the 2nd SANG Brigade and the Qataris "did what they were supposed to. And they did it well....They did what they were supposed to with a minimum of loss of life." Another sergeant assigned to the 2nd SANG who later traveled through Kuwait with the 8th Brigade of the regular Saudi army commented, "I wouldn't be afraid to go with them today."

Use of Training Schedules. Differences in military styles came out in two areas. One pertained to training schedules previously mentioned. American units will develop a training plan and training schedules and allow these documents to guide their actions. To many Arab officers adherence to such documents seems less compelling.

NCO Skill Comparisons. A second area of difference between Arab and U.S. soldiers pertained to the diversity of training common to U.S. Soldiers--at least with regard to Saudi soldiers. An American SF NCO generally has a broader range of military skills than does an equivalent rank in a conventional U.S. unit. By the same token, the U.S. soldier has competency in a greater variety of tasks than his Saudi equivalent. A Saudi soldier may be trained to do only one task. As one engineer sergeant described the situation:

You get an SF NCO who is used to working in four or five different areas [skills]. One day he comes and instructs them [Arabs] in retrograde tactics. The following day he instructs them in medical skills. Then he changes to some engineer task. So this NCO does a week's worth of training while their typical officer can do only one thing. Or, one of their NCOs only knows one thing. They are lost--they are amazed that one American can learn and do so many tasks well.

This baffles the enlisted guys more than the officers. It amazes them that one individual can know and do so many things. Even an American private can tear down several different weapons systems. All the Arab private knows how to do is take apart, say, one machine gun. He doesn't know how to drive the APC he rides in; he doesn't know how to operate the main gun, if the main gunner gets killed; he doesn't know how to fix the APC if it breaks down. All he knows is how to fire that one machine gun. To try to teach him anything else--that's not his job. That is one of the Arab problems. They get centered on doing one thing really well--they get set in their ways and are reluctant to learn anything new.

Arabs are likely to define their personality according to the specialized roles they are assigned rather than by the array of technical functions they can acquire. The Arab tendency to learn and specialize in one task or set of responsibilities also functions as a very effective defense mechanism in his shame/honor culture. The less one is responsible for doing or knowing, the fewer one's chances are for making a mistake and being held accountable.

The whole culture actively discourages risk-taking; therefore, if one seeks responsibility or learning or knowledge outside of his assigned/structured area of responsibility, he is increasing his chances of making a mistake and looking like a fool. Arab culture and educational systems poorly equip an Arab soldier for high technology.

An intelligence sergeant described a similar situation with his SANG brigade:

They [the soldiers] would almost always take the easiest solution to a problem. It may not be the correct solution. Their magazines for their FN/FAL rifles hold 20 rounds. Not to an Arab. They would try to get 25 into one magazine....We found that some of them had only two years of education. An enlisted man with nine years of education got positions and promotions commensurate with that.

You would find throughout the brigade .50 caliber gunners who wouldn't know how to do anything with that gun except wipe it down. We would teach them head space and timing. You know with a .50 cal, if you don't have a head space and time gauge, then something is wrong. We were passing out head space and timing gauges and showing them how to use them.

In one case on the battalion commander's vehicle, the gunner had poured diesel on the gun and wiped it down. It was all shiny. I broke it

down, and the bolt was all rusted. Their excuse was always that the real gunner is on vacation; he is not here today. I took the bolt apart and the Saudis are looking at me in amazement. They started jabbering. I asked the interpreter what they were talking about. He replied that they had never seen the bolt outside of the weapon.

The assigned task identifies their role behavior. Role specialization is common to Arabs, more so than the American concept of teamwork. The emphasis is not on training unit members as a team but rather in role specialization which ties members of the unit to each other by their specialties.

This leads into the area of Arab learning styles. Americans who have observed initial entry training in Arab countries report that the soldiers learn by rote often in a sterile learning environment. The training is by lecture, from which the soldiers take notes and on which they are tested. Their training characteristically contains much less hands-on time than in the U.S. Army. Often there is a shortage of equipment. The soldiers learn how to keep their equipment pretty, but they are not skilled even at first echelon maintenance.

While the soldiers become good at jerry-rigging equipment, they do not take it apart regularly in order to maintain it. Thus preventive maintenance (PM) is generally a nonstarter in the Arab military (and manufacturing) organizations. PM is essentially a Western concept of postponed gratification. The Arab firmly believes that "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." To down a piece of equipment that is operating, at least marginally, is looking for trouble. Successful preventive maintenance programs have been implemented in the Arab world, but they rely heavily on Arab trainees identifying with (i.e., trusting) the trainers. The Arab soldier or mechanic never truly believes in the efficacy of PM, but if "My 'technical superior' does it, it works for him; so I'll do it, because he preaches it and practices it."

VIEWS ABOUT CROSS-CULTURAL PREPARATION

Members of 5th Group had the advantage of previous training with Arab forces. Said a senior officer, "I think our training programs go a long way in preparing people.... There were a thousand success stories with 5th Group personnel. Very few failures." Members of the medical company acquired enough from their briefings and handouts during mobilization to accept certain realities of Arab culture. The medical company executive officer (XO) stated her unit did not have a lot of problems with the Arab people: "I don't think anybody in our unit mistreated any Arabs. I don't think any of them mistreated our people." (That company had previously trained in Honduras, Panama, and Bolivia.)

Though none of the CA personnel interviewed had trained in Arab regions, their generic cross-cultural orientation and their specific overseas experience at least prepared them to anticipate differences. One CA officer stated, "Nothing I saw about the Arabs bothered or shocked me. Being from a civil affairs unit, we are prepared for cultural shock when we go to another country."

The CA personnel interviewed understood the importance of working effectively with the host populace, and they did their jobs well. However, some of their interpretations concerning Arab surface culture indicated a superficial understanding of Arab society. One officer became very distrustful of Saudi merchants, whom he thought were trying to overcharge him. A CA captain suggested that CA companies need some type of additional generic training beyond that of their target nation (such as Germany).

The excellent quality of the orientation briefings on Arab culture during the train-up period at Ft. Bragg impressed another CA officer, but he recommended that formalized language training be offered. When none was forthcoming, he purchased Arabic language tapes and studies on his own. A CA captain thought that the conventional units needed better cross-cultural preparation. The enlisted personnel he observed openly displayed a condescending attitude toward Arabs and, in fact, toward all the allied forces except the British.

Some friction occurred at higher levels. A senior SF officer observed: There were a lot of examples of ugly Americanism, based on what I just described. Some of this occurred within organizations charged with working with the Arabs. Some Army liaison teams in the field, who did not have the cultural background, were baffled by what they saw and could not understand why the Arabs did not do things the way we did. They could not understand how the Arabs get anything done. The frustration level would go up precipitously.

Most of the specific guidelines of what can contribute to successful American and Arab interaction came from 5th Group personnel.

You have to put personal feelings aside when you first enter their environment and see men kissing each other on the cheek and hand-holding.

Rapport has made or broken many a detachment. Learning a little about their lifestyle in all our briefings has helped.

The fastest way to establish that rapport is just to live with them, to eat what they are eating, to share what they are sharing. If they are digging a hole, then you help out digging a hole. Don't just see them once a day like for lunch. You are not going to get very far with them....Share, work together with your counterpart. Do these things first and other things will fall into place. There is no rehearsal for establishing rapport. It is a play-by-ear situation....Be professional. Try not to lose your cool, because they are not doing things the American way.

On ice-breaking and rapport-building techniques, an SF engineer sergeant reflected on flexibility and adapting to Arab interpersonal culture (present: interior life) patterns:

When you get introduced to them, just go with the flow....I found that the best way to build rapport with them was not to be afraid to live with

them....If you want to keep their confidence, you have to live with them a lot more than most Americans were willing. You have to be willing to spend ten or twelve hours a day around them, and not approach them just on occasions when you want something or want them to do something for you. The Arabs get cold if the only time they see you is when you want something from them. You have to be totally immersed in them the whole time you are there.

The comments above are critical points. The word "trust," with its sociological implications, should probably replace the psychological implications of the word "rapport." The SF trainers developed this trust by entering into the interpersonal culture rhythms of their counterparts. Furthermore, this enabled the SF better to sense or intuit the mind-set of their counterparts and to harmonize their own communication style with that of the Arabs. To the Arabs the Americans became less alien, more emotionally discernible, and more receptive to nuances of communication, thus proving themselves worthy of Arab regard.

On understanding Arab communication styles:

Arabs are good at reading body language. They read eyes very well. They can tell when someone is feeding them a line. It is important to make a good impression. Once when my counterpart held my hand, I took it as a sign of respect. They like to speak real close to you. One counterpart would come up and almost put his nose on the tip of mine.

On influencing one's Saudi counterparts, the trainers suggested:

Throw out little things but make them think they thought of an idea first....One thing that helped us [in conducting joint training] was to show that we were human. We acknowledged when we made mistakes, and we all laughed the whole thing off. We didn't try to come across as being perfect. It helped create an atmosphere where nobody was pointing fingers at nobody.¹¹

It is important to work at your host-nation's pace, not at your own normal American pace. Don't be afraid to bring yourself to their level. In the preparation phase, language is important.

One sergeant emphasized the importance of adapting to local customs:

When it comes to eating, the eye of the goat is a delicacy. They always want to give you the eyes or the lips. You just eat it and try not to make

¹¹ On this point one Arab specialist advised the authors: "Be very careful in acknowledging a mistake or lack of knowledge to Arab trainees. It frightens the Arab trainees to discover that the expert does not know all the answers. It also destabilizes the trainees. The Arab trainee, in his bone marrow, knows he is poorly equipped to venture into the high tech jungle. If the American 'expert,' with much better education, training, experience, and motivation hasn't mastered the technical specialty in question, then what chance do I, as an Arab noncom with five years education, have?"

any bad impression. I ate dinner with the chief of staff and the minister of defense of Qatar. I had just pulled a missile out of his sand dune, and they thought that was all neat. They offered me these delicacies and I ate them. I was used to them by that time anyway.

Other recommendations from the trainers were:

Don't be afraid to live with them. And be prepared to drink two or three gallons of tea a day....Show the Arabs you are willing to learn from them, too.

You can be an ugly American and try to bully the Saudis at times--you can use that approach to your advantage, but you have to use it very carefully. At times you even found the Egyptians bullying the Saudis.

Nothing replaces going overseas and working in the CINC's area with indigenous forces such as in Bright Star and those kind of exercises....Your cannot replicate the training you get from being there.

You have got to have tons of patience and understanding in order to be successful.

Section IV: Summary

While not an empirically thorough analysis, the results of the twenty-one interviews provide a perspective for interpreting how Americans and Arabs cooperated in their mission during the Gulf War operations. The partnership was an encounter between a culture with a dominant economic cultural (near future: work life) pattern (American) and one with a dominant political cultural (past and far future public life) pattern (Arab).

On the whole, Americans found it somewhat easier to work with Arabs who spoke some English and who had studied in the West. Observers and transactors expressed a preference toward those Arabs who were less restrictive than the Saudis in Islamic practices. Immersees found language differences and Islamic beliefs to be much less of a barrier. Primordially Syrians were the most challenging to work with. Syria is competing with Iraq for Arabic leadership and is suspicious about working with an Israeli ally. The conditions of a high tech environment and participation within a multinational coalition neutralized somewhat the impact of primordial sentiments.

The interview findings indicate that both the Americans and the Arabs adjusted and accommodated to the other. The observer and transactor interviewees upon arrival were somewhat open to accepting the reality of cultural differences. This was the result of the individual characteristics of the persons concerned (relatively high education level and previous overseas experience) and, to a lesser degree, to their predeparture orientation.

Having trained in the Arab world previously, the immersees could more readily adapt. A summary of the survey findings follows with the accent on the experiences of the immersees.

1.) Blind spots of Arabs: seeing Americans in terms of our economic culture (near-future: work life) tendency. The necessity of "getting things done" drives Americans. This produces a sense of urgency about goals, the practice of scheduling and organizing events, and a compulsion to identify problems and apply technical solutions. While Arabs respect American technical skill in the abstract, this appreciation in and of itself neither necessarily makes them receptive to individual Americans on an interpersonal level, nor moves them to embrace American modes of planning and efficiency.

2.) Blind spots of Americans: on the practical level, the flexibility and resourcefulness of the immersees brought about the cooperation needed to accomplish the tasks of joint training and operations. On a cognitive level--because predeparture training does not address it--the immersees may not have fully appreciated either the significance of Arab interpersonal culture (present: interior life), or the patterns of political culture (past and far future: public life), or the role of primordial sentiments in shaping an Arab's individual sense of identity. In the interviews, the immersees did not express the basic contrast between American "To Do" culture (emphasizing

achievement and getting things done) versus Arab "To Be" culture (emphasizing position, status, and personal relationships).¹²

3.) Receptive centers of Arabs: American acceptance of Arab hospitality, the American use of Arabic, and the American general deference to Arab customs were positive factors. The immersees' attuning themselves to the interpersonal culture (present: interior life) patterns of their Arab counterparts worked well. It allowed the immersees' humanness to become obvious to the Arabs. Special Forces thus established an atmosphere of trust and emotional connection within which they were able to display their military professionalism. Special Forces set a tone of helping the Arab forces achieve improvement within their own sphere of activities and to work toward mutual goals, rather than implying that they must transform themselves to do things "the American way."

4.) Receptive centers of Americans: the willingness of Arab commanders--some sooner than others--to accept technical assistance from their U.S. trainers and to make technical improvements in their training and operations was a facilitating factor to success. Nothing makes a SF soldier happier and more productive than for an ally to say, "Let's train together." Likewise, interviewees classified as observers and transactors generally reflected a positive attitude in that they found the Arabs they dealt with polite and cooperative. This reduced their anxiety about being thrust into an alien population.

The American personnel had several months in which to prepare for combat, if it were to come. The ground war lasted only 100 hours. The operation was entirely one-sided. It cannot be said that either American forces, or the alliance with Arabs, or the Arab performance was fairly tested in battle. The preponderance of Allied firepower, the mobility of its forces, and the brevity of the war precluded any stringent test of the training and liaison which Arabs received from American personnel. In a practical sense, the effectiveness of their training was not battle-tested. Neither the trials of adversity nor the tests of a prolonged war took place.

These observations do not detract from the American performance, but they open the need to evaluate training against battlefield adversities and prolonged engagements. It is with these thoughts in mind that some recommendations are made for cross-cultural training.

¹² This contrast is a generic concept that many cross-cultural trainers use to differentiate American and Northern European culture, on one hand, from the culture of developing countries, on the other. In the former, the predominate value is doing; in the latter, it is being. See Edward C. Stewart and Milton J. Bennett, American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective, Yarmouth, ME, Intercultural Press, 1991, pp. 69-71.

Section V: Cross-Cultural Recommendations

This section offers an evaluation of the predeparture cross-cultural preparation for ODS/S and proposes a general structure for future training.

ASSESSMENT OF CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING FOR DS/S

The qualitative measure of predeparture cross-cultural preparation raises the questions of efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency denotes optimal use of organizational/institutional resources to conduct the training. Effectiveness denotes how well it accomplishes the objective. The objective might include these criteria: 1.) How well was the individual soldier trained? 2.) How well did U.S. troops work with their host nation counterparts?

For non-SF units, the preparation reflected a widely varied, but hastily assembled, improvised quality. Outside the SF community, Army cross-cultural preparation is not institutionalized in any way. Cross-cultural information was usually conveyed within the array of the overall country briefing. After-action reports give examples of cases in which such organizations as Military Police and medical units dealing with enemy prisoners of war and displaced civilians could have benefited from language training and more in-depth, cultural familiarization.

Nevertheless, for most of the troops, the cumulative effect of the briefings and orientations, booklets, and hand-outs, combined with some individually initiated self-study, seems to have produced a qualified success. A volunteer force with a positive attitude toward the mission and with confidence in their senior leadership also contributed to benign individual conduct.

With SF, predeparture preparation came close to a complete success--albeit with one qualification--to be explained below. The validation and train-up period of other SF personnel in units not previously oriented to the Middle East might include provisions for survival language training. Special Forces cannot always rely on having such individuals as the CA captain who bought tapes and learned Arabic on his own.

TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS

The qualification concerning SF preparation pertains to the emphasis on sensitivity and on avoiding giving offense, something on which American cross-cultural training is fixated. Horror stories abound about "Ugly Americanism," and no one can dispute that non-offensive behavior is certainly an improvement over gauche, insensitive conduct. Still, problems can accompany exclusive emphasis on sensitivity, awareness, and "Do's and Don'ts."

The concept of cultural relativism--the view that no one culture should be seen as inherently superior to any other--and the emphasis on sensitivity to cultural differences underlie the American belief to be equally sensitive to all non-Western foreigners. Up to a point, this approach has practical payoffs, but limitations arise. The problem becomes one of a uniform response--the notion that Americans treat all

foreign cultures, and all those within a culture, alike. This response retards our ability to respond on an emotional level to the variances of social organization and differing social contexts.

As important as a knowledge of Do's and Don'ts is within the context of cultural familiarization, over-emphasizing it can be counterproductive. It can lead to what American University Professor Gary Weaver refers to as a "those people" mind-set: "There are we normal Americans; then there are 'those people' you don't touch with your left hand, at whom you don't point the sole of your foot, to whom you don't offer alcohol, etc." This mind-set reinforces rather than lowers the psychological barriers between the Americans and the host populace.

A generic cross-cultural structure, like the Cultural Triad, may also embody country- and culture-specific information of any region. A progressive, three-stage training model is proposed, each stage corresponding to the classifications of observers, transactors, and immersees. These classifications are particular to this survey and may prove artificial and inapplicable in analyses of other overseas deployments. Their continued use here is to help maintain continuity of thought about the degree of interaction of the target audience with host-nation populace. The delivery methods for the training in all three stages include lecture, discussion, and applicable videos.

I. First Stage: Observers

The proposed training objective for observers is: to represent themselves, their unit, and the U.S. favorably within the host nation by not giving offense. For troops categorized as observers, perhaps the most that can be done in any large scale training program is to follow the "sensitivity" and "non-offense" tack, while remaining cognizant of its limitations. This stage would include the usual orientation about the host country along with the Do's and Don'ts.

The scope of this training would, in effect, be limited to surface and deep culture. To provide a contrasting background, America can be described as "a melting pot." Though that term is debated, U.S. society is an inclusive culture that theoretically accepts all races and nationalities. The host populace, by way of contrast, may be an exclusive culture, however tolerant its members are individually. Americans identify with work and individual achievements more than with ethnicity, language, or religion. Other societies, such as those of the Arabs, place more emphasis on social affiliation and on group identity than on individual achievement.

The mnemonic ORAL might be useful:

Observe differences in the host culture without judging whether the differences are "good" or "bad."

Respect the ways of the host culture: the language, customs, and religion.

Adapt yourself to working within the social context of the host nation. Familiarize yourself with their customs and learn phrases of their language. We need

their support and cooperation to accomplish our mission. Don't expect the host-nation populace to do everything our way.

Learn from them--they have something to teach us, too.

II. Second Stage: Transactors

The proposed training objective for transactors is: to conduct business and training transactions harmoniously and effectively with one's host-nation counterparts. This stage would add procedural culture to the body of information covered in the first stage. The three rhythms of procedural culture might contrast American economic culture (near-future: work life) with, say, the predominant interpersonal culture (present: interior life) or political culture (past and far future: public life) of the host nation.

In the case of Arab societies, these topics may be introduced concerning interpersonal transactions: importance of hospitality, patience, a reduced level of future planning, vertical causation, lower sense of urgency about schedules, and how avoidance of personal confrontations takes precedence over positions of factual accuracy.

III. Third Stage: Immersees

The proposed training objective for immersees is: to influence counterparts toward attainment of mutual goals. The particulars of the host cultures are presented within the structure of the total Cultural Trilogy with more emphasis on procedural culture. There may not be definitive answers to these questions, but the subjective aspects of communication skill development within the host culture should be discussed: 1.) refusing; 2.) confronting; 3.) taking initiative; 4.) giving and receiving compliments and criticism; 5.) conducting small talk; 6.) expressing humor; 7.) expressing opinions; and 8.) negotiating. (These suggested communications skills came from Carolyn Feuille of LanguaTech, a San Francisco-based training company.) For those doing instruction, the learning style of the host populace needs elaboration.

In the third stage, within the structure of the Cultural Trilogy, the mind-set concept is introduced to enable the immersees to help recognize their unconscious American assumptions. The term "mind-set" refers to our conditioned frame of reference used to describe our own phenomena of the First Triad. To discuss mind-set is to signify that the holder is deliberately prejudiced, ethnocentric, or inherently hostile to another group. Yet, anyone's own culturally conditioned frame of reference can restrict his understanding of cross-cultural encounters.

The key is to come to grips with one's own assumptions. That portion of the training points out that there is such a thing as a mind-set. Lectures and/or readings that focus on underlying American assumptions may be followed by group discussion on our own American culture. A video of the "contrast American" can be helpful. (Description of the contrast American technique comes from Pierre Casse, Training for the Cross-Cultural Mind: A Handbook for Cross-Cultural Trainers and Consultants, Washington: Society for Intercultural, Training, and Research; 1981, p. 112.) The actors in the video play roles that show the sharply different procedural culture of an American manager, Mr. Smith, trying to re-establish business ties with a Mr. Khan in a

non-Western country. Each actor contrasts the other's reactions. Discussion can follow this video to compare and contrast the mind-sets. This vivid dramatization of the different mind-sets should stimulate discussion among the immersees regarding their previous experiences of a similar nature.

A final step in training effectiveness would be to replace the video with live simulations of contrast culture, using trained actors. The scenarios would be written to be relevant to the situations in which trainees would be performing

Section VI: Areas of Deficiency in Cross-Cultural Training

This section describes three areas of deficiency in the Army's cross-cultural endeavors--ones that may be common throughout the entire military--and ones that the authors have identified. These areas are:

1. Diffused Responsibility. The responsibility for developing and implementing cross-cultural training programs throughout Army units is neither clearly identified nor assigned to a staff function. A reading of staff officer duties suggests that the S-5/G-5 should propose and monitor such a program while the S-3/G-3 incorporates it into the training plan. In reality, cross-cultural training responsibility is ill-defined, usually falling through the proverbial crack. In ODS/DS, the responsibility for training and briefing was frequently dropped into the chaplains' laps, on the presumption that their previous ministerial schooling in comparative religion also embraced comparisons of cultures, societies, and languages.

With no single staff officer assigned the initiative in cross-cultural training, the entire program becomes "commander-dependent." This means it may be ignored; it may merely receive lip service; or it may become a substantive program, depending on the commander's degree of understanding about cultural interaction--or the pressure he receives from higher up.

2. "Sensitivity" Fixation. Much of the cross-cultural training conducted at DOD schools derives from training models developed in the U.S. during the last twenty-five years by trainers in intercultural communication. Several cultural values from American social psychology have penetrated and permeate American cross-cultural training. Americans typically have accepted the proposition that an emphasis on awareness of self and others yields an ethic of sensitivity. This ethic dictates that our conduct toward those who are initially perceived as "different" should be based on the principle of avoiding giving offense. For Americans, living in a nation governed by a political system that supports diversity, the ethic of sensitivity has become a part of public life.

The ethic of sensitivity has also been applied in the cross-cultural field because of the assumption that awareness automatically makes for better understanding, increases harmony, and creates cooperation among members of different groups. Although this ethic is deeply entrenched in American thought and society, this assumption does not necessarily hold up, when Americans use it to guide their behavior in an authoritarian society, or even in an authoritarian organization. An approach which gives priority to offense avoidance may override discernment of emotional diversity and individual and group identities within the host culture.

Nor is the somewhat romantic notion valid--one that American cross-cultural trainers commonly accept--that an increase in the range of information and feeling about another people necessarily modifies behavior. Awareness can also intimidate and inhibit. (It could be argued that Palestinians and Israelis are people who understand each other very well.) One, furthermore, does not necessarily have to "like" another social group in order to work effectively with members of that group.

3. Missing Emotional Element. Missing from the American approach in cross-cultural training is a perspective on the emotional impact of the cultural concept of the self. The American self reference is rooted in individualism, in the basic need for self-actualization, and in competitive social interaction. These values persuade Americans to see culture as traditions and customs that impose uniformity of behavior across individuals, a view which invites two misperceptions.

First, culture as uniformity of behavior fails to accommodate cultural variations which exist within every society. Second, stepping outside the American cultural skin, we can observe that Americans typically ignore the influence of the emotions on how the diversity of thought, behavior, and feeling inherent in each individual is organized at the level of the cultural group. When people share such social actualities as language, tradition, ethnicity, and religion, their sentiments toward these actualities generate similar identities, leading us to define culture as the social organization of diversity. In such cultural contexts, cross-cultural training poses such issues as how members of a culture create trust and establish loyalty--difficult ideas for American individuals to cope with.

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